

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
Reply to the Office Action of July 2, 2007

REMARKS

Introduction

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-25 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 10, 19, and 24 have been amended. No new matter is being presented. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are requested.

1. Rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph:

Claims 1-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

With respect to claims 1, 10, 19, and 24, on pages 2-3 of the Office Action of July 2, 2007 (hereinafter the "Office Action"), the Examiner alleges that these claims are indefinite. In particular, the Examiner states that the recitations of "a supporting bracket coupled at opposite ends thereof to the supporting plate," appear to be inaccurate in view of paragraph [0039] and Fig. 6 on the Application.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 10, 19, and 24 are currently amended to clarify a disposition of the supporting plate and supporting bracket to address and clarify each of the Examiner's concerns. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, claims 1-25 satisfy all the requirement of 35 U.S.C. §112, and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

2. Rejection under 35 USC §102(b): Nakamura et al.:

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,409,209 to Nakamura et al. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is currently amended to clarify a disposition of the supporting plate and supporting bracket. As amended, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose, teach, or suggest all of the limitations recited in independent claim 1.

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
Reply to the Office Action of July 2, 2007

In particular, Nakamura et al. describes a sheet delivery mechanism to extend a time to transfer a printed sheet from the delivery rollers to the printed sheet storage. See Nakamura et al., abstract. Nakamura et al. does not describe, among other things, "a supporting plate coupled at opposite ends thereof to the image-forming device and installed at the paper-discharging port side of the image-forming device," or "a supporting bracket coupled to the supporting plate to rotatably support the idle rollers facing the paper-discharging rollers," as presently recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, since Nakamura et al. does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 1, as presently recited, this claim is allowable over Nakamura et al., and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of this claim is respectfully requested.

3. Rejection under 35 USC §102(b): Morita:

Claims 10-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.5,265,869 to Morita. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

a. Claim 10:

With respect to independent claim 10, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is currently amended to clarify a disposition of the supporting plate and supporting bracket. As amended, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose, teach, or suggest all of the limitations recited in independent claim 10.

In particular, Morita is directed to a paper conveying apparatus wherein follower rollers and a second guide plate are independently supported on a support plate to be openable / closable. See Morita, Abstract. That is, as illustrated in FIG. 1, Morita describes a second guide plate (5) supporting the follower rollers (9) which is bolted to a support plate (7) by a pair of bolts (15), the support plate (7) coupled to the deck body 25. See Morita, Col. 4, lines 5-25 and 35-44. Morita then describes a first guide plate separately coupled to the deck body (25) with opening to accommodate conveying rollers (8), which are separately mounted on a drive shaft 17 also coupled to the deck body (25).

This is not the same as "a supporting plate formed on the paper-discharging port side of

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
Reply to the Office Action of July 2, 2007

the image-forming apparatus having opposite ends thereof fixedly coupled to the image-forming apparatus,” or “a supporting bracket having a middle portion formed between opposite ends thereof, on which the idle roller is rotatably mounted to contact the paper-discharging roller,” as presently recited in independent claim 10.

Accordingly, since Morita does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 10, as presently recited, this claim is allowable over Morita, and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of this claim is respectfully requested.

b. Claim 11-18:

With respect to dependent claims 11-18, it is respectfully submitted that for at least the reason that these claims depend from independent claim 10, which is patentably distinguishable from Morita for at least the reasons provided above, and therefore contain each of the features as recited in independent claim 10, dependent claims 11-18 are also patentably distinguishable from Morita, and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of these claims are respectfully solicited.

4. Rejection under 35 USC §102(b): Morita:

Claims 19 and 21-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Morita. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

a. Claim 19:

With respect to independent claim 19, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 19 is currently amended to clarify a disposition of the supporting plate and supporting bracket. As amended, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose, teach, or suggest all of the limitations recited in independent claim 19.

In particular, as described above, Morita is directed to a paper conveying apparatus wherein follower rollers and a second guide plate are independently supported on a support plate to be openable / closable. See Morita, Abstract. That is, as illustrated in FIG. 1, Morita describes a second guide plate (5) supporting the follower rollers (9) which is bolted to a support

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
Reply to the Office Action of July 2, 2007

plate (7) by a pair of bolts (15), the support plate (7) coupled to the deck body 25. See Morita, Col. 4, lines 5-25 and 35-44. Morita then describes a first guide plate separately coupled to the deck body (25) with opening to accommodate conveying rollers (8), which are separately mounted on a drive shaft 17 also coupled to the deck body (25).

This is not the same as “a supporting plate formed on a paper-discharging port side of the image-forming device having opposite ends thereof mounted on the image forming device,” or “a supporting bracket having a middle portion formed between opposite ends thereof, on which the idle rollers are rotatably mounted to contact corresponding ones of the paper-discharging rollers,” as presently recited in independent claim 19.

Accordingly, since Morita does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 19, as presently recited, this claim is allowable over Morita, and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of this claim is respectfully requested.

b. Claims 21-23:

With respect to dependent claims 21-23, it is respectfully submitted that for at least the reason that these claims depend from independent claim 19, which is patentably distinguishable from Morita for at least the reasons provided above, and therefore contain each of the features as recited in independent claim 19, dependent claims 21-23 are also patentably distinguishable from Morita, and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of these claims are respectfully solicited.

5. Rejection under 35 USC §103(a) Morita and Kawada:

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Morita in view of Japanese Publication No. 3-293242 to Kawada. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that this claim is currently amended to clarify a disposition of the supporting plate and supporting bracket. As amended, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose, teach, or suggest all of the limitations recited in independent claim 1.

In particular, as described above, Morita is directed to a paper conveying apparatus

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
Reply to the Office Action of July 2, 2007

wherein follower rollers and a second guide plate are independently supported on a support plate to be openable / closable. See Morita, Abstract. That is, as illustrated in FIG. 1, Morita describes a second guide plate (5) supporting the follower rollers (9) which is bolted to a support plate (7) by a pair of bolts (15), the support plate (7) coupled to the deck body 25. See Morita, Col. 4, lines 5-25 and 35-44. Morita then describes a first guide plate separately coupled to the deck body (25) with opening to accommodate conveying rollers (8), which are separately mounted on a drive shaft 17 also coupled to the deck body (25).

This is not the same as "a supporting plate coupled at opposite ends thereof to the image-forming device and installed at the paper-discharging port side of the image-forming device," or "a supporting bracket coupled to the supporting plate to rotatably support the idle rollers facing the paper-discharging rollers," as presently recited in independent claim 1.

Further, since Kawada was cited by the Examiner merely to allege it discloses a spacing adjustment unit disposed between idle rollers, Kawada does not teach or suggest the limitations of this claim which is lacking in Morita. While the Examiner alleges that Kawada discloses "that is it well known to provide a paper-discharging apparatus with a spacing adjustment unit (including 4, 6, and 9), in which element 9 and a spring are disposed between idle rollers (10) to constantly maintain a pressure between a paper discharging roller (1) and the idle rollers (10)," see Office Action, page 10, it is respectfully submitted that Kawada does not disclose the limitations of claim 1 lacking in Morita. That is, Kawada describes a capstan roller 1 fixedly mounted on a frame 3 and hollow rollers 10 pressed against the capstan roller 1 by a two or more compressing roller 6. Accordingly, Kawada also does not describe a supporting bracket coupled to a supporting plate as recited in this claim, and claim 1 is allowable over Morita and Kawada, separately or combined.

Serial No.: 10/684,417
Docket No.: 102-1001
Amendment dated October 2, 2007
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Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, there being no other objections or rejections, this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

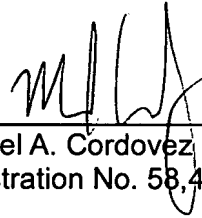
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

If any further fees are required in connection with the filing of this amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 502827.

Respectfully submitted,

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